
FY 2020
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@usda.gov by **May 1, 2020**.

(NOTE: Italicized / red comments are for reference only. You may delete them after completing form.)

Project Name	South Orogrande Exploration Drilling
District Name (or "Forestwide")	Red River
County where project located?	Idaho
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email <i>If a partnership, please add name, phone and email; however, an FS employee MUST BE the project proponent and point of contact.</i>	Marty Jones, martin.jones@usda.gov (208) 553-1311
Legal Location	T26N, R7E, Sections 1 and 12 T26N, R8E, Sections 1 and 13 T27N, R7E, Sections 11 and 36 T27N, R8E, Section 31 Boise Meridian
Decision Maker's Name	Terry Nevius
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	No
Which CE Category does this project fit?	<u>36 CFR 220.6(e)(8)</u> : Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads.
At what level does the Decision Maker want the project scoped? Internal ____ External* <u>X</u> <i>Internal scoping will be through the Small NEPA IDT, unless otherwise specified. Scoping would be documented in the Extraordinary Circumstances Checklist.</i> <i>External scoping will be with the public via a scoping letter, a legal notice, and the scoping letter posted on the NPCWNF website. The Project will only be scoped to the Tribe(s) et al (see block below) unless otherwise specified.</i>	

Provide a list of the individuals, groups, agencies, etc. (other than those listed below*) with their mailing address and/or email address, of those who will be included for External Scoping.

- DO NOT provide only a name.
- DO NOT leave this box blank: If no additional individuals are to be externally scoped please enter NA.

Gold Lion Resources
1859 Whitney Mesa Drive
Henderson, NV 89014

Does the Decision Maker want a Legal Notice published in the Lewiston Tribune? Yes X No

The scoping period will be 14 days unless the Decision Maker wants to change it. 14 Days

What Level of Analysis (below) does the Decision Maker want for the Project?

 Low level: Choose this level if the project's level of public scrutiny is expected to be relatively low or unknown. Documentation for low level analysis projects would be a completed Extraordinary Circumstances checklist filled out by the specialists, including the name of the specialist who performed the analysis, the project name, and date it was completed. No other written documentation would be generated.

X **Moderate level:** Choose this level if the project's level of public scrutiny is expected to be relatively moderate to high. In this case, specialists would complete the Extraordinary Circumstances checklist with the only write up being for resources that are present and the rationale for the effects call. No write up would be given for items in the checklist that are not present.

If the determination is no effect (which most CE's should have zero to very little adverse effects), then document *why* that determination was made in one paragraph or less. If the determination is an adverse effect, then *why* that determination was made would be written in less than three paragraphs.

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

12, 17, 20

What are the Management Area(s)' Goals and Standards?

MANAGEMENT AREA 12 (539,884 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 12 consists primarily of forested lands. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented as are a variety of commercially valuable, softwood tree species. A variety of physical and biological environments occur as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation (approximately 3,800-6,500 feet), and climatic factors. This management area occurs across the entire non-classified portion of the Forest. Although this management area consists primarily of productive forest land, there are minor inclusions of non-forest and low productivity forest lands.

This management area contains inclusions of other management areas as shown below:

In addition to the 539,884 acres mapped for this management area, there are approximately 29,193 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage for timber production and other multiple uses on a sustained yield basis. Develop equal distribution of age classes to optimize sustained timber production. Manage at levels and intensities consistent with the schedules described in this plan to provide for other multiple uses and resources. Manage for roaded natural recreation.

The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 109,444 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 310,544 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 114,225 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning.

RESOURCE ELEMENT STANDARDS

The Forestwide management direction included in Chapter II of this Plan applies to this management area.

RECREATION

Dispersed Recreation

Visual Resources

1. Manage for roaded natural recreation.
2. Interim visual quality objectives are modification or maximum modification. Adopted VQOs will recognize sensitive (Sensitivity Level 1 and 2) viewpoints and travel routes.

WATER

1. Meet established fishery/water quality objectives for all prescription watersheds as shown in Appendix A.

ROADS

Trails

1. Construct and reconstruct primarily to achieve timber management objectives.
2. Maintain trails to provide for user safety commensurate with use.

PROTECTION

Fire Management

1. Wildfire management strategies are control, confine, and contain. Specifics on implementation, shall depend upon location, expected fire behavior, and values at risk. Decision criteria shall be specified in the Fire Management Action Plan.
2. Planned ignitions, when within prescription, will be allowed to burn to enhance resource values.

MANAGEMENT AREA 17 (104,529 acres)

A. Description

Management Area 17 consists primarily of forested lands that have a high to medium degree of visual sensitivity. These lands have a range of physical and biotic environments as determined by soil, slope, aspect, elevation, and climatic factors. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5, and 6 are represented in these areas. This management area occurs Forestwide on the nonclassified portions of the Forest. This management area contains inclusions of other management areas as shown below:

In addition to the 104,529 acres mapped for this management area there are approximately 6,680 acres of this management emphasis which occur as inclusions in other management areas.

B. Goals

Manage for timber production within the constraints imposed by the visual quality objectives (VQOs) of retention or

Is the project in a designated Idaho Roadless Area (IRA)? No If yes, which one?
Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness Area, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No
Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? Yes
Are there Municipal Watersheds in the project area? No If yes, which one?
Is the project located in an RHCA? Yes -- partly
Describe the Existing Conditions of the project area. The dominant feature of the project area is the adjacent Big Creek Meadows, which is characterized by various wetland species. The remainder of the project area is vegetated with predominately upland vegetation and timber of mixed species, along with smaller areas of riparian vegetation. Large parts of the area have been burned over by the recent McGuire fire. Evidence of considerable historic mining activity exist throughout the area.
Describe the Desired Conditions of the project area. The project site will be returned to as close to original conditions as practicable through concurrent reclamation and applied mitigation measures.
What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action*? The purpose of the project is to approve Gold Lion Resource's Plan Of Operations to explore for mineral resources on National Forest System lands in the area of the proposed action. In accordance with 36 CFR 228.5, the Forest Service is required to determine whether to approve the Plan, as proposed, or to require changes or additions to the Plan deemed necessary to minimize adverse environmental effects and to provide for reclamation of surface resources (36 CFR 228.8).

Describe the Proposed Action.

Gold Lion Resources of Henderson, Nevada proposes to conduct exploration drilling operations south of Orogrande, Idaho. The proposal is for a total of 52 drill sites in two areas.

- The first area is located just south of Orogrande between the confluence of Crooked River and the West Fork of Crooked River. Four sites will be drilled in this area. Access to the first area is by State Highway 14 (South Fork) to Forest Development Road 233, then on Road 233 to just past the junction of Road 233 and Road 311 to the first four sites.
- The second area is located in the general area of the West Fork of Big Creek. The remainder of the drill sites are located in this area. The second area is accessed via Road 311 south to the Big Creek Meadows area.
- Approximately 3,500 feet (15 feet wide) of temporary road will need to be constructed to provide access to some of the drill sites. Total surface disturbance of the temporary roads will be approximately 2 acres.
- Drill pads will be offset from the existing road prism to provide for passage of motorized traffic.

Depending upon availability, the 4-inch holes will be drilled using two truck/track mounted or skid mounted core drill rigs. Each drill site is approximately 30 feet x 50 feet in size, and may be slightly larger or smaller depending on slope and other conditions at a particular site.

- The number of holes drilled in each site will vary and will be dependent on results of ongoing drilling.
- The holes will be drilled to a maximum of 1500 feet deep, but may be adjusted as targets become more defined.
- Total surface area of all drill sites will be approximately 1.9 acres.
- As drilling is nearing completion at one site, the next site will be prepared ahead of time to minimize the amount of time the drill rig will need to sit idle.

A sump or infiltration gallery approximately 6 feet wide by 8 feet deep by 15 feet long will be dug at each site to contain drill fluid and to allow drill cuttings to settle out.

- No drill additives are anticipated to be used. However, if required, all drilling additives will be biodegradable.

This project will require water withdrawal from nearby streams. A water use permit will be obtained from the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

- All water withdrawal sites will be reviewed by Forest Service specialists before water is taken from any stream.

The operator will be using various pieces of equipment to support drilling, including but not limited to:

- RC Drill Truck Mounted
- Core Drill
- Power Pack – Drill Core
- Portable Rod Storage
- Rubber Tired Forklift
- ATVs
- Pickup Trucks
- Water Truck
- Fuel/Lube Truck
- Water Pumps

People involved with the Project will be limited to the drill crew, geologist, and occasional corporate or consulting staff. It is expected that the drill crews and other support staff will stay in Elk City for housing.

- Some staff may elect to camp within the mine claim boundary using existing dispersed camp sites.
- Personnel camping within the claim will follow the same rules as the general public for dispersed

List the Design Feature / Mitigation Measures * to be included with the Proposed Action.

General Requirements (NOTE: These are general requirements for mining related activities. **Not all listed requirements are relevant to this proposed action.** All requirements that *are* relevant to this proposal will be adhered to.)

1. Notify District Ranger or minerals administrator at least 48 hours before any work is to begin.
2. Wash all vehicles and equipment used at the site before being brought onto National Forest system lands to prevent the spread of noxious weeds, seeds or propagules.
3. Avoid disturbance of wetlands and stream riparian zones.
4. Avoid working on saturated soils. Exploration activities must cease to avoid sedimentation into intermittent streams if excessive storm water or ground water runoff is occurring.
5. Prevent discharge of water into any live stream or wetland. To avoid erosion and discharge impact to streams, all activities (including drilling, construction of pads, hand-dug sumps, and any overland travel) will be kept at least 164 feet (50 m) from flowing water that is down gradient.
6. Place weed free straw bales or install silt fence in places as identified by a Forest Service representative to minimize sediment migration from stockpiles and disturbed ground.
7. Obtain prior approval from the Forest Service for cutting or removal of trees or other large live vegetation. Downfall may be removed as needed.
8. Set aside cleared slash and green vegetation (e.g., bear grass) during test pit construction. Remove vegetation in clumps, if possible, with the soil mass intact. Store excavated topsoil and subsoil in separate stockpiles to be used during reclamation. Temporarily replant vegetation clumps in the topsoil stockpile.
9. Maintain only one (1) active pit or trench open at any one time. Reclamation may be occurring at one (1) other pit or trench concurrently.
10. To help alleviate the need for field crew to decide if fish are present in water withdrawal locations, a 1/8" screen will be installed on pump intake hoses even when utilizing a 5-gallon bucket with drilled holes. Water withdrawals will be located on small, high gradient streams as far up creek drainages as feasible to avoid habitat used by fish and sourced from streams under existing permits from the State of Idaho.
11. Collect process water in the existing pit. Regulate discharge to prevent overtopping the pit, and/or land apply excess water on a site designated by the Forest Service. Application sites will typically be natural sumps or depressions, pits or trap(s) that avoid impacts to wetlands or streams and minimizes impacts to other surface resources. Application rate will be such that overland flow is avoided and a natural infiltration occurs through forest duff.
12. Backfill and reclaim each test pit as soon as testing has been completed for that site.
13. Follow the State of Idaho Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all surface disturbing activities, reclamation, and abandonment. BMPs are outlined in the Best Management Practices for Mining in Idaho (Idaho BMPs) (Idaho Department of Lands, et al. 1992).

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource for your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mike.hays@usda.gov; 983-4028

Fisheries – Derrick Bawdon, derrick.bawdon@usda.gov; 963-4211

Heritage – Christy Mog, christy.mog@usda.gov; 935-4269

Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cynthia.valle@usda.gov; 963-4203

Minerals – Marty Jones, martin.jones@usda.gov; 983-5158

Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@usda.gov; 935-4270

Soils – Alex Rozin, alexandra.rozin@usda.gov; 842-2100

Wild and Scenic River – Chris Noyes, chris.noyes@usda.gov; 935-4251

Wildlife – Jim Lutes, james.r.lutes@usda.gov; 963-4202

Small NEPA Planner – Jeff Chynoweth, james.chynoweth@usda.gov; 935-4260

PROJECT MAPS

Please send – separate from this form and per the instructions outlined below – a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) with the project submission email.

- Make sure that the map layers can be turned on / off / are editable.
- Make sure the map(s) fits on an 8.5 x 11 sheet of paper.

Provide at least one map, preferably “portrait” orientation, with the project area / features as:

- a Point, e.g. culvert, bridge, etc.,
- a Line, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc., and/or
- a Polygon, e.g. stand boundaries, treatment areas, etc.
 - Do not use a point if treating an area, use a polygon.
 - Points/lines/polygons need to be distinct and easily found on the map.
 - The project area / site needs to be centered on the map, especially if only one area/feature.

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map’s base layer.

- Do not add contour lines to the FV map unless needed for clarifying the proposed action. Contour lines can make the map difficult to read.
 - If contour lines are needed, make sure they are distinguishable from other linear features such as roads, trails, streams, etc.
- A topo map can be substituted for the FV map. If using a topo map but the contour lines are not important the topo lines should be light gray or opaque.
- Regardless of base map, make sure there are identifiable elements, e.g. towns, roads, streams, etc. on the map to help locate the project area on the landscape and that the elements are clearly labeled.

The preferred map scale (typically 1:24K) is whatever scale best presents the project area’s location and proposed activities:

- If the 1:24K scale is too small (i.e. the project feature(s) – point/line/polygon – would be hard to find or would be indistinguishable on just one map), use a larger scale to show the overall project area (coarse scale map) and smaller scaled maps to show the project features (fine scale map).
- If the 1:24K scale is too big (i.e. the project feature is a tiny point or thin line lost/hard to find on the larger landscape), use a smaller scale to highlight the feature while ensuring there are elements on the map to identify the project’s location.
- If you need to make additional maps, please make as few as possible.

At a minimum, all maps should include (with the preferred but not set in stone location on the map):

- a Title (project name and district name only (please); centered at top)
- a Legend (features clearly labeled; lower right corner)
- a Scale (in half mile, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5 miles, or full miles, e.g. 0__0.25__0.5__1.0 miles; lower left corner)
- a North Arrow (upper right corner)
 - Display all of the above in boxes with black outlines and a white backgrounds (not gray or yellow)
 - Do not ‘Halo’ the text or numbers or anything else on the map. Please.
 - The Scale needs to be large enough to read the numbers.

Finally, please include the mapmakers name and the date it was created on the map.

The Map(s) you provide will be used for Scoping the Public and the Tribes and in the Decision document. Please make sure they show – clearly, effectively, and professionally – what activity or activities are being proposed and where they are located on the Nez Perce - Clearwater National Forests.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists require the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activities before they will conduct their analyses. Providing the shapefile does not substitute for providing a pdf map.

The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile, or a location where the shapefile can be found, to the Small NEPA Planner (currently: jjchynoweth@usda.gov) by the time or shortly after the District Ranger submits this form.

- Shapefiles need to include the Project Name and have the Feature (culvert, bridge, etc.) labeled.
- Shapefiles need to include the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml.

Projects in Roadless Area

What is the Inventoried Roadless Area name?	<u>Forest Plan IRA Name (if different):</u>
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management Classification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Wild Land Recreation</i> • <i>Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance</i> • <i>Primitive</i> • <i>Backcountry Restoration</i> • <i>General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland</i> 	Classification(s):
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.23</i>	
Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.24</i>	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes* No <i>* If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2 then navigate to Subpart C 294.25</i>	

JC : 2/25/2020

Additional Information: